

~~14~~ 16. (Amended) Polyethylene-based composition for the manufacture of pipes and pipe couplings according to Claim 1, wherein talc is added in an amount effective to increase a creep resistance of said pipes and pipe couplings made of said composition.

E1 ~~15~~ 17. (Amended) The polyethylene-based composition for the manufacture of pipes and pipe couplings of Claim ~~15~~ <sup>13</sup>, wherein talc is added in an amount effective to increase a creep resistance of said pipes and pipe couplings made of said composition.

~~16~~ --18. (amended) A pipe or a pipe coupling comprising the composition of Claim 1.

no. 11/10/01 ~~17~~ --19. (amended) A pipe or a pipe coupling comprising the composition of Claim 3. ~~17~~ <sup>18</sup>

E2 ~~18~~ --20. (Amended) The composition of Claim 1, wherein the composition is in the form of a shaped article characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.

~~19~~ --21. (Amended) The composition of Claim 3, wherein the composition is in the form of a shaped article characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.

~~20~~ --22. (Amended) The pipe or pipe coupling of Claim ~~18~~ <sup>16</sup>, which is characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.

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23. (Amended) The pipe or coupling of Claim 19, which is characterized by creep resistance (t), wherein t = creep resistance expressed in terms of time to fracture, measured according to ISO Standard 1167 (1996) at 20° C on a pipe having a diameter of 50 mm and a thickness of 3 mm and under a circumferential stress of 12.4.

Please add the following Claims:

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24. The pipe or pipe coupling of Claim 18, wherein the polyethylene is high density polyethylene.—

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25. The pipe or pipe coupling of Claim 19, wherein the polyethylene is high density polyethylene.--